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Saving lives: Navy hospital corpsmen

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By Cpl. Isaac Lamberth, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Joshua Blanchard, a hospital corpsman with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 and Carson City, Nev., native, completed a three-week tour at the Bastion Role 3 hospital working side-by-side with staff there. (Photo by Cpl. Isaac Lamberth)

The Bastion Role 3 hospital is known in Helmand province for its superb medical care and the extraordinary talent of its medical staff.

Completing a three-week tour at the hospital, two sailors from Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 gained combat life-saving experience and were able to apply their training while there.

Navy Petty Officers 3rd Class Nicholas Becker and Joshua Blanchard, hospital corpsmen with the squadron, began working at the Bastion-based hospital hoping to put their medical training to use.

They would soon be put to the test as the hospital regularly receives combat injuries.

Known to some simply as ‘Role 3,’ the code for the top echelon of medical care provided, the Bastion hospital is the only one of its kind in Regional Command Southwest and one of three in the entire country.

The hospitals are staffed with a variety of medical specialists, ranging from intensive care doctors to radiologists and surgeons, who see a wide range of injuries.

While there, the duo’s medical skills and knowledge were put to the test.

“We saw a lot of critical injuries come in,” said Becker, a native of Independence, Iowa. “Some of these guys just got out of engagements and really needed our help.”

Becker said the diversity of the hospital was a bit overwhelming, but he adapted and believes it will benefit him in the long run.

“I was a bit apprehensive when I first got there because of all the different countries that work there and the different procedures that are used,” he explained. “I was used to working alone and doing battlefield medicine. I had to change the way I was doing things and work as a team. Everyone on the team has a part to do and it took me a while to get used to that and not

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- February 2015 (16)
- January 2015 (12)
- December 2014 (17)

just think of it as a one-man show.”

Members of the United Kingdom, Estonia, Netherlands, [U.S. Army](#) and numerous service members from other countries make up the staff of the Role 3. Becker believes the diversity of the staff benefited him and gave him a new appreciation for working with a coalition of forces.

Blanchard, a Carson City, Nev., native, said saving people's lives helped him feel like he was making a difference.

He said one of the most rewarding experiences he had was when a seven-year-old boy arrived at the hospital with a gunshot wound to the chest and survived.

“To me, seeing him live after all he had been through. . .it was an amazing sight,” he said.

Riding on the heels of the 114th birthday of the Navy Hospital Corps, a bit of pride resides inside both sailors.

“We were the only Navy guys there in the entire hospital,” Becker said. “Not only that, but our birthday was coming up and it sends a feeling of pride through you that men and women before you have been doing this for over a hundred years. We're still continuing that tradition of saving lives on the battlefield.”

Upon completing their time at Role 3, Becker and Blanchard have both resumed their normal duties within the squadron.

With real-life trauma experiences under his belt, Becker hopes to apply his new knowledge in future endeavors. Becker said he plans to apply to Marine Special Operations Command or the [Navy SEALs](#).

Blanchard said the knowledge he gained in the three weeks at Role 3 will follow him for the rest of his time in the Navy.

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First thanks to the authors for giving informative information about such health care center to us. Bastion-based hospital is a great health service provider with a variety of medical specialists, ranging from intensive care doctors to radiologists and surgeons. Medsempire sabbir always expect long live for this type of healthcare center.

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October 2014 (15)
September 2014 (20)
August 2014 (14)
July 2014 (13)
June 2014 (8)
May 2014 (11)
April 2014 (9)
March 2014 (14)
February 2014 (7)
January 2014 (7)
December 2013 (7)
November 2013 (12)
October 2013 (7)
September 2013 (14)
August 2013 (13)
July 2013 (11)
June 2013 (22)
May 2013 (15)
April 2013 (14)
March 2013 (14)
February 2013 (14)
January 2013 (12)
December 2012 (11)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (7)
September 2012 (9)
August 2012 (12)
July 2012 (13)
June 2012 (17)
May 2012 (22)
April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)
November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)